



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10**

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, WA 98101-3140

OFFICE OF
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

October 4, 2010

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426

Re: EPA Region 10 Review of the Swan Falls Hydroelectric Project in Idaho (FERC Project No. 503-048). EPA Project Number: 10-010-FRC

Dear Ms. Bose:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Swan Falls Hydroelectric Project (CEQ Number 20100348) in Ada and Owyhee counties, Idaho. Our review of the FEIS was conducted in accordance with our responsibilities under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The FEIS evaluates the potential impacts associated with the relicensing of Swan Falls dam under three different alternatives: no action; the Applicant's alternative (Idaho Power); and the FERC staff alternative. The FERC staff alternative has been revised significantly from the Draft EIS, and has been identified as the preferred alternative.

In our April 26, 2010 comments on the Draft EIS, we indicated a desire to see additional information included in the final EIS with respect to adaptive management, including timelines for evaluation and triggers for pursuing additional management measures. We also requested an expanded discussion on the role of the Snake River White Sturgeon Conservation Plan (WSCP) within the relicensing process. We appreciate the effort on the part of the FERC staff to address these concerns in the FEIS. In particular, we are pleased by the modifications made to the staff alternative with regard to aquatic resources. We encourage the FERC to carry each of these elements (timeframe for contingency planning related to water quality standard violations; implementation of the identified measures within the WSCP; and the feasibility study and follow on measures identified related to rebuilding the population of the white sturgeon) forward in the licensing decision.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments, and I encourage you to contact me, or Teresa Kubo of my staff at (503) 326-2859 or kubo.teresa@epa.gov with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Christine B. Reichgott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Christine" and last name "Reichgott" clearly legible.

Christine B. Reichgott, Manager
Environmental Review and Sediment Management Unit